Redwing, Turdus iliacus

One dead bird found by Olafsfell on 23rd August.

Snow Bunting, Plectrophenax nivalis

Frequently seen. Flocks of over 20 birds most days at Nautalda and a similar flock at Oddkelsalda on 19th August. Earlier they were more often in small groups of ten-15 birds, and occasionally as individuals.

Raven, Corvus corax

Only one pair observed which was resident at Nautalda. The scarcity of this species was surprising since an abundance of fresh gosling corpses provides an ample food supply.

Ravens were frequently seen outside Pjorsarver. A pair was resident near Fossrofuloekur and six were seen at one time at Hveravellir on 1st September. Much less common, however, than in the farming areas nearer the coast where they are abundant.

On nominate Lybius leucomelas (Boddaert)

by P. A. CLANCEY

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Since Winterbottom (1958) reviewed the races of the Pied Barbet *Lybius leucomelas* (Boddaert), *sens. strict.*, of southern Africa, his conclusions have given rise to numerous communications in the periodic literature. Notes and papers on subspeciation in this barbet published since the stated revision in 1958 are Clancey (1959, 1963, 1967), Irwin and Benson (1967), Traylor (1965), and Winterbottom (1962).

In my recent Catalogue of Birds of the South African Sub-Region (1965) I admit five races of this barbet as against the three recognised by Winterbottom. A new study of the racial variation in *L. leucomelas* recently undertaken at the Durban Museum confirms the races and their ranges as laid down in my Catalogue and has thrown further light on the disposition of the southern populations with the medio-ventral plane speckled with black, with which I associate the name *L. l. leucomelas* (Boddaert), 1785: Cape of Good Hope, Cape Province, but to which Winterbottom attaches *L. l. namagua* (Sclater), 1922: Klipfontein, north-western Cape Province.

In his efforts to preserve namaqua as discrete from nominate leucomelas, Winterbottom moved the type-locality of the latter from the present day Cape of Good Hope east to Beaufort West, in the Karoo of the Cape. This action was taken with the aim of allocating nominate leucomelas to birds with whitish and unspotted or largely unspotted median underparts, on the grounds that no reference was made to such spotting in the description of the species in Latham, Gen. Syn. Birds, vol, i, 2, 1782, p. 502, upon which Boddaert's Bucco leucomelas was founded. As the entire nomenclatural edifice of L. leucomelas rests on the correct determination of the populations to which B. leucomelas was first applied, particular attention was paid to this issue during my recent research into this species and its variation. Vol. 88

I find that some Pied Barbets collected from within the range of the spotted "namaqua" of Winterbottom during the months of February-April, when newly moulted, give an initial impression of being unspotted, unless the feathers are raised by the thumb and forefinger, when the speck-ling and shaft-streaking will be found in such specimens to be sub-apical in distribution. Wear and feather desiccation result in such birds assuming a spotted facies similar to better marked examples as the plumage ages and weathers. Bearing in mind the scientific standards obtaining in the late eighteenth century, a freshly moulted and lightly marked example of "namaqua" could be described and illustrated as having white underparts.

The second point to be considered is the vexed question of the typelocality of nominate L. leucomelas. In 1783 the term "Cape of Good Hope" was given to an ill-defined region of southern Africa, falling largely within the limits of the present Cape Province to the south of the Orange R. Writing in 1957, Macdonald discussed the western geographical variation in the Pied Barbet and restricted the type-locality of nominate L. leucomelas to the Cape Flats, in the vicinity of Cape Town, in the south-western Cape. Winterbottom, without mentioning Macdonald's action, "amended" the type-locality to Beaufort West, in the Karoo of the Cape, As Macdonald had already, in 1957, proposed a restricted type-locality (Cape Flats) on the basis of similar reasoning to that employed by Winterbottom one year later, the action of the latter worker was unnecessary. As grounds for accepting Beaufort West are no more cogent than those for adopting a restriction of the type-locality to the Cape Flats, I believe we should accept the first, Macdonald's, proposal. However, the issue is purely academic, as it is evident that the three type-localities: Cape of Good Hope, Cape Flats and Beaufort West, now available for L. l. leucomelas, all fall within the range of populations in which the medio-ventral plane is variably marked with drop-shaped spots and/or shaft-streaks of black, which are subspecifically inseparable from like populations resident in northern Little Namagualand (topotypical of L. l. namagua).

In the adequate panel of material now before me, I find that birds with black spotting and streaking to the middle of the lower breast range from about the Richtersveld and the lower Orange R., south to the Cape of Good Hope, and Cape Agulhas thence eastwards south of 31° S. lat. to the valley of the Great Fish R., in the eastern Cape. A single specimen from Beaufort West examined shows spotting and streaking to the midbreast, and numerous other namaqua-like specimens are present from well north and east of this locality, as shown on the accompanying map. In the material assembled, particularly good samples are available from two south-eastern and eastern localities, namely Kleinpoort at 33° 20' S., 24° 53' E., and Tarkastad at 32° 01' S., 26° 16' E. From Kleinpoort a sample of seven 3° has been available, six specimens of which are as palpably spotted over the mid-breast as the most strongly marked of the numerous topotypes of namaqua from Springbok, in Little Namaqualand, the seventh showing cryptic, sub-apical spotting. Nine \mathcal{F} are available from Tarkastad; seven of these are immediately seen to have the mid-breast spotted, while the other two show a like but sub-apically distributed development.

The following are localities from which *namaqua*-like birds were examined :—



Upper row:

Middle row:

From left to right Nos. 1-3 specimens from Springbok, Little Namaqualand (topotypical of *L. l. namaqua*), 4 specimen from De Bosch, Calvinia, 5 specimen from Still Bay, south-western Cape.

1 specimen from Adelaide, 2-3 specimens from Kleinpoort, 4 specimen from Adelaide, 5 specimen from Hofmeyr, eastern Cape.

Bottom row: 1-3 specimens from Glen, Bloemfontein, Orange Free State, 4-5 specimens from Kuruman, northern Cape.

Specimens in the upper and middle rows with speckling and streaking to the mid-breast represent L. l. leucomelas (with L. l namaqua a straight synonym). In the bottom row, specimens 1-3 with streaked flanks represent L. l. centralis (note plain white mid-breast), while specimens 4 and 5 with unstreaked flanks are L. l. nkatiensis.

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North-western Cape: Noisabis, Annisfontein, Viool's Drift, Kuboos, Springbok, Kamieskroon; south-western Cape: Calvinia, Klaver, Clanwilliam, Kersefontein (Berg R.)*, Melkbos Strand, Cape Agulhas, Still Bay, Robertson, Matjiesfontein*, Welbedacht*, Swellendam; southern Cape: Dwyka*, Calitzdorp, Laingsburg; central Cape: Victoria West, Carnarvon*, Sutherland, Beaufort West, Murraysburg; eastern Cape: Kleinpoort, Pearston*, Graaff-Reinet, Somerset East-Bedford, Cradock*, Tarkastad, Adelaide, Hofmeyr*, Committees Drift*.

(N.B. Localities asterisked have yielded samples in which the medioventral speckling in one or more specimens is sub-apical in distribution, and is only revealed by raising the feathers. In material from the localities



The Cape Province, South Africa, and immediately adjacent territories Map showing the loci of specimens of Pied Barbets identified down to subspecies in the Cape Province and certain peripheral territories.

- Specimens palpably or cryptically speckled over the mid-breast=L. l. leucomelas (Boddaert)
- \triangle Specimens with mid-breast plain white, and flank streaking reduced = L. l. centralis (Roberts)
- Specimens with mid-breast plain white, and flank streaking vestigal or absent = L. l. nkatiensis (Roberts)

not asterisked the speckling in all specimens is evident without raising the feathers).

From the above it will be appreciated that the name *namaqua* (1922) and *leucomelas* (1783) apply to one and the same racial group of populations, and must be treated as synonymous.

In so far as the Cape Province is concerned two other groups of populations require to be considered. Both occur to the north of the range of L. I. leucomelas and are whiter below, lacking the mid-breast speckling and shaft-streaking. In both groups the black flank streaking is reduced, and in one is almost non-existent. Also associated with these trends of variation is a demonstrable decrease in size and an increase in the amount of lemon yellow sagittate speckling to the upperparts and yellowness of the rump. A distinction between these two whitish ventralled groups of populations is sometimes tenuous along the southern periphery of their ranges owing to the intergradation between them and with the nominate race. However, on the basis of the variation pattern in the species as a whole, it is considered desirable to admit them as two races, one in which the white of the underside is more creamy and the flanks virtually unstreaked (L. l. nkatiensis [Roberts], 1932: N'kate, Botswana), and the other with the flanks moderately streaked and the ventral white colder in tone (L. l. centralis [Roberts], 1932: Rustenburg, Transvaal). The former also ranges still smaller in size and is more copiously marked above with lemon yellow spotting, the wings of 10 $\stackrel{\circ}{\circ}$ $\stackrel{\circ}{\circ}$ 80-84 (82.5), 10 $\stackrel{\circ}{\circ}$ 78-83 (80.5). In 10 3 3 of L. l. leucomelas the wings measure $83 \cdot 5 \cdot 89 (85 \cdot 4)$, $10 \text{ } \text{ } \text{ } \text{ } 81 \cdot 85$ (82.8). In centralis the wing-length is intermediate : wings of 10 3 3 81-85 (83.0) mm. L. l. nkatiensis also shows a reduction in the mass of the bill and the degree of the lateral notching.

The Cape ranges of both *nkatiensis* and *centralis* can be assessed from the data provided on the accompanying map. L. l. nkatiensis extends north of Cape limits through South-West Africa to Angola, south-western Zambia, western Matabeleland, Rhodesia, and the dry west of the Transvaal. L. l. centralis ranges from the north-eastern Cape and southern Griqualand West to the Orange Free State and the southern Transvaal highveld. The other two races admitted by me in my Catalogue are eastern in disposition: L. l. affinis (Shelley), 1879: Weenen, Natal, and L. l. zuluensis (Roberts), 1931: Mkuzi R., north-eastern Zululand. Both of these have the underside suffused with pale lemon or saffron yellow in freshly moulted dress. L. l. affinis has the flanks streaked as in centralis, with which it agrees in size; zuluensis has the flanks unstreaked (like nkatiensis) and is smaller than affinis (wings in 3 3 80 mm. and below).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Just over 250 specimens were assembled for this research. To augment the Durban Museum series of 120 specimens, Cape and other relevant material was borrowed from the following museums: South African Museum, Cape Town (31), East London Museum (76), the Transvaal Museum (20), and the National Museum of Rhodesia, Bulawayo (6). To the Directors and responsible officials of these institutions I tender my best thanks. References :

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On the "montana" variety of the Common Partridge

by James Harrison

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In his account of some mutations occurring in the genera *Alectoris* and Perdix, Ash (1966) discussed their genetical implications and stressed the fact that such anomalies of plumage could have phylogenetic significance. He also suggested that these mutations may provide evidence of reversal to a primitive type in accordance with my own findings on some recurring varieties in the Anatidae (Harrison 1953). The principle postulated that such mutations are usually the result of the recombination of recessive genes and that these may lie dormant for a very long time in the gene pool



Figs. I and II. The Mountain or Cheshire Partridge, Perdix perdix perdix var "montana", on left, adult female, on right, juvenile male.